

REMARKS

Summary of Office Action

Claims 1-130 are pending in the above-identified application.

Claims 97-106 were withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a nonelected invention.

Claims 1-17, 19-26, 29-33, 35-36, 38-63, 65-87, 90-93, 95-96 and 107-130 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Jaeb et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0003095 (hereinafter "Jaeb").

Claims 18, 27-28, 34 and 88-89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jaeb.

Claims 37, 64 and 94 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jaeb in view of Lax U.S. Patent No. 5,988,376 (hereinafter "Lax").

Summary of Applicants' Reply

Applicants amended claims 123 and 127 to more particularly point out the claimed invention.

Applicants traverse the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) of claims 1-96 and 107-130.

**Applicants' Reply to the § 102(b) Rejection over
Jaeb of Claims 1-17, 19-26, 29-33, 35-36, 38-63
65-87, 90-93, 95-96 and 107-130**

Claims 1-17, 19-26, 29-33, 35-36, 38-63, 65-87, 90-93, 95-96 and 107-130 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Jaeb.

Applicants' independent claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107-110, 122 and, as amended, 123 and 127, and dependent claims 2-17, 19-26, 29-33, 35-36, 38, 40-63 65, 67-87, 90-93, 95, 111-121, 124-126 and 128-130, which depend from claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107-110, 122, 123 and 127, respectively, are directed to systems and methods for locking and unlocking an item in a container. All of the aforementioned claims require a locking member that may be moved from an unlocked position to a locked position. In addition, all the claims require that "the entirety of the locking member is internal to the container" when the locking member is in the unlocked position.

The Examiner alleged that Jaeb shows all of the features of applicants' independent claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107-110, 122, 123 and 127. Jaeb is directed to a security container for holding items. Security container 10, which has a base coupled to a lid, may be locked by engaging lock slide 18, carried by the base, with the lid (Jaeb, ¶ 7).

Lock slide 18 (Jaeb, FIG. 1) has slide teeth 64 for engaging lid teeth 50 (Jaeb, ¶ 38). In the unlocked position, lock slide 18 is offset from lid teeth 50 to allow the box to be opened (Jaeb, ¶ 38). Furthermore, in the unlocked position, "a portion of main wall 60 [of lock slide 18] protrudes through sidewall 32 [of the base] so that [lock] slide 18 may be easily moved from the unlocked position to the locked position" (Jaeb, ¶ 40). Applicants respectfully assert that when lock slide 18 protrudes through sidewall 32 to unlock container 10, a portion of lock slide 18 is not internal to container 10.

Applicants respectfully submit that Jaeb therefore does not show or suggest an apparatus in which the "entirety of [a] locking member is internal to [a] container" when the locking member is in the unlocked position, as required by applicants' claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that, for at least the foregoing reason, the claims are allowable over Jaeb. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-17, 19-26, 29-33, 35-36, 38-63, 65-87, 90-93, 95-96 and 107-130 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

Applicants' Reply to the § 103(a) Rejections

A. Claims 18, 27-28, 34 and 88-89

Claims 18, 27-28, 34 and 88-89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jaeb.

Claims 18, 27-28 and 34 depend indirectly from independent claim 1. Claims 88-89 depend indirectly from independent claim 66. As discussed above, Jaeb does not show or suggest an apparatus in which the "entirety of [a] locking member is internal to [a] container" when the locking member is in the unlocked position, as required by applicants' claims 1 and 66. Accordingly, claims 18, 27-28, 34 and 88-89 are patentable over Jaeb for at least the reasons that claims 1 and 66 are patentable over Jaeb. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner's rejection of claims 18, 27-28, 34 and 88-89 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

B. Claims 37, 64 and 94

Claims 37, 64 and 94 were rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jaeb in view of Lax.

Claims 37, 64 and 94 depend indirectly from independent claims 1, 39 and 66, respectively. As discussed above, Jaeb does not show or suggest an apparatus in which the "entirety of [a] locking member is internal to [a]

container" when the locking member is in the unlocked position, as required by applicants' claims 1, 39 and 66. Accordingly, claims 37, 64 and 94 are patentable over Jaeb for at least the reasons that claims 1, 39 and 66 are patentable over Jaeb.

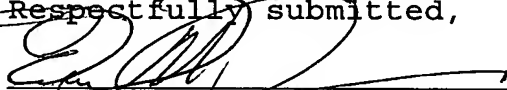
In addition, Lax is directed to a case having a locking mechanism that is removably coupled thereto (Lax, FIGS 6-9, emphasis added). Therefore, the present invention patentably improves upon Lax by providing a locking member such that the "entirety of the locking member is internal to [a] container" when the locking member is in the unlocked position, as required by independent claims 1, 39 and 66.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner's rejection of claims 37, 64 and 94 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that, for at least the foregoing reasons, claims 1-96 and 107-130 are allowable and that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and prompt allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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